

## DutchCare's Polder model works



a treat

Resident Mrs Sparrius reads to young visitors

**D**utchCare Ltd in Victoria has been awarded the 2006 International Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing "Excellence in Ageing Services Award" for its "Polder model".

The Polder system of tight cooperation between staff, residents and family members, and particularly between the staff, focuses on skills rather than position.

DutchCare developed the system, incorporating the Eden Alternative philosophy, and emphasises staff empowerment, as well as adopting a team-based system of work while recognising that the building of relationships between staff, residents and family is essential.

The DutchCare Polder model calls for the same staff being allocated to the same residents whenever they work. They get to know each other and staff know when something is not right in their world.

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## Accreditation checklist

Around **60-70%** of applications for accreditation received by the Agency require further information.

Most often the problems are:

- payment not received (or the wrong payment)
- not all administrative information is included
- information for new residents is not included

- site plan not provided
- the home's vision, values, philosophy, objectives and commitment to quality are not included.

A checklist is provided as part of the application for accreditation. Applicants should use the checklist to ensure they supply all required information.

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## Just a word...

The Federal Minister for Ageing, Senator Santo Santoro has announced new measures to prevent elder abuse in aged care, following a meeting with state and territory ministers responsible for aged care and ageing.

While most media coverage has focused on the introduction of compulsory police checks for employees and volunteers, and the necessity to report offences such as assaults, there has also been support for an increase in unannounced visits to aged care facilities by the Agency.

In the 2004-2005 financial year, the Agency conducted 553 of its visits as spot checks, that is, with less than 30 minutes' notice.



This figure is set to rise. All aged care facilities will receive at least one unannounced visit each year. The focus of these visits will be on care standards.

Last month, the Agency held a series of QAIT (Quality Assessor

Information and Training) sessions across the country focusing on interviewing residents. The session, for both Agency employees and contract assessors, looked at various ways to make a resident feel comfortable enough to provide detailed information about their care. Factors such as body language, confidentiality and reassurance were discussed as ways to ensure a resident feels they can talk about issues that are of concern to them, particularly if they are of a sensitive nature and also to talk about their positive experiences as a resident.

**Mark Brandon**  
Chief Executive Officer

### Cont'd from page 1

CEO of DutchCare Petra Neeleman said: "The purpose of the program is to provide lives worth living for elders, jobs worth doing for staff and homes worth visiting for families, within tight budget constraints, registered nurse shortages, and a hostile media and market place."

DutchCare has a strong focus on providing culturally appropriate services for the Australian Dutch community. In DutchCare facilities, residents can communicate in either English or Dutch; they have traditional Dutch meals, they can play Dutch games; listen to Dutch music and have access to Dutch Television Channel. The homes are divided into small households with individual names and are decorated to remind them of their previous lifestyle.

Positive results of the Polder model include:

#### Reductions in:

- hospitalisation of residents, particularly end of life
- death rates of residents compared to others of similar age and frailty
- staff absenteeism due to sick leave
- agency staff usage down by 200%

#### Increases in:

- staff retention
- staff skill levels
- family contacts/visitor numbers
- community involvement
- public profile
- staff/resident satisfaction.

The IAHSAs Excellence in Ageing Services award recognises organisations and/or individuals for programs and services that are models of innovation and excellence and that contribute

significantly to the quality of life of the individuals served.

DutchCare currently provides services to almost 800 elderly Dutch people in Victoria, including residential care, independent living units, community aged care packages, community visitors, activity groups, telephone monitoring, friendly visiting, and an information and referral service.

Petra will speak at the Agency's Adelaide Better Practice event on 'Resident-focused care for Dutch residents' as part of the Cultural and linguistic diversity session. The Better Practice event is being held in Adelaide on 25-26 May. For information on the events or to register, contact (02) 8831 1028 or go to [www.accreditation.org.au](http://www.accreditation.org.au).

For more information on DutchCare, go to [www.dutchcare.com.au](http://www.dutchcare.com.au).

# Two awards for LHI Retirement Services

LHI Retirement Services in South Australia has been awarded two Better Practice awards, for their 'Move Easy program' and their 'Whole of Organisation Staff Development'.

## Move easy

While LHI adopted the common practice policy of 'no lift, no injury' in 2003, the home also identified the need for greater ownership of the policy and practices by all staff.

The 'Move Easy' program was developed with a risk management approach, focusing on the assessment of each individual resident; the development of a special in-house education program and a multi-disciplinary team, including physiotherapists, nurses, and HR department.

The program was measured by the decreased number of manual handling accident claims and the static number of resident falls (and significant reduction of fractures), at a time when the dependency levels of residents have risen significantly. Staff feel better trained and are able to interact with residents with more confidence.

## Staff development

LHI Retirement Services introduced an innovative model for staff development covering all aspects of staff education and development tailored to suit each individual staff member, their role and the area within which they work.

The objective of the program was to produce a learning culture, with care and service delivery underpinned by a quest for



knowledge and a willingness to accommodate change, for the benefit of residents.

Education programs included hospitality, staff development, 'Move Easy', dementia education days and a variety of Certificate and Diploma courses negotiated with external providers.

The program's effectiveness has been measured through staff surveys, consultation with

managers, personal development reviews, monitoring industry-wide trends, contemporary practice and research, incident and hazard reports and involvement with key internal and external committees.

As a result of the program there is an increased interest in personal and professional development among staff, with linkages between education and change management.

# A statement by the Minister for Ageing, Senator Santo Santoro, on the 2006 Federal Budget

I am pleased to announce that in this year's Federal Budget the Howard Government has invested more than \$6.9 billion in 2006–07 in supporting older Australians, both in aged care and in their own communities.

The major initiatives funded in this year's Budget will increase the already high standards of care in Australian aged care homes, and make aged care services available to more Australians than ever before.

The Budget commits \$108.3 million over five years for new initiatives, and funding totalling \$311.3 over four years to extend existing programs. I believe this funding is clear and concrete evidence of the Government's commitment to recently announced reforms in the areas of security and service quality.

## Funding for security

My recent commitment to introduce reforms to increase security for aged care home residents has been backed by more than \$10 million over four years.

Funding for the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency will be increased by \$8.6 million over four years to allow for a big increase in the number of unannounced visits to aged care homes.

This means that around 5,200 visits will be made each year, including 3,000 unannounced visits, compared to 563 unannounced visits in 2004–05. All homes will have at least one unannounced visit each year.

I believe that these extra spot checks will provide aged care residents, their families and the public with greater confidence that the high standards of care required by the Government are being met on a consistent basis.

The Government is also providing \$1.8 million over four years to meet the costs of mandatory police checks for all volunteer visitors to aged care homes under the Community Visitors



Scheme. Mandatory police checks will also be required for all staff in residential and community aged care services subsidised by the Australian Government.

Although key personnel, such as Directors of Nursing, are currently required to undergo police checks, other aged care staff and volunteers under the Community Visitors Scheme have not been subject to the same requirement.

Compulsory police checks throughout industry will reduce the risk of unsuitable people accessing aged care services and causing physical or sexual abuse. I know that these incidents are rare, but these checks will provide added security and confidence to people in care and their families.

I cannot speak highly enough of the wonderful staff in aged care residences across Australia who are the engine room of the industry. The overwhelming majority of the more than 160,000 Australians who rely on our aged care systems already enjoy high quality care from these dedicated and loving staff. These changes will further build public confidence in the aged care sector.

In another initiative to improve the quality of care that residents receive, the Government is providing funding to increase the number of volunteer visitors to Australian Government subsidised aged care homes. The number of volunteers supported by the

Community Visitors Scheme will increase from 6,588 to 7,500.

This scheme coordinates volunteers to visit aged care residents, bringing friendship and companionship to those more socially isolated and vulnerable frail older people who would benefit from more social contact and support.

Additional funding of \$4.7 million over three years will be provided for this initiative.

## Commitment to staff

As I said earlier, I believe that aged care staff are the heart of the industry and they deserve to be supported. This year's Budget has made a solid commitment to the dedicated staff who work in the aged care industry.

It contains close to \$90 million in new and renewed initiatives to support aged care staff and help them build their skills.

The Government is also backing its investment in the security of residents with a \$21.6 million four-year program to identify and replicate the best aspects of clinical and personal care in aged care homes.

Improvements in care skills and practices in aged care homes will be encouraged by involving leading aged care services in research projects, together with researchers and educators, to develop and implement best practice in aged care.

We will be giving priority to research projects in key areas of care including clinical assessment, medication and wound management, infection control and falls prevention.

Community care workers will also be supported with \$13.4 million allocated over four years to support training for community aged care workers to ensure they have the right skills to deliver quality care. Community care workers will now be able to access training opportunities similar to those already provided for residential aged care workers.

Priority will be given to care workers involved in providing Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) packages and EACH Dementia packages, with workers being able to gain up to Certificate IV qualifications.

Importantly, funding of \$36 million over four years will be continued for up to 1,000 aged care nursing scholarships, valued at up to \$10,000 a year, to encourage more people to take up aged care nursing and to improve career pathways for nurses already working in aged care.

A total of \$30 million over four years will enable aged care workers in smaller aged care homes to upgrade their skills and will encourage more people to work in aged care in rural and isolated locations.

Last week I announced the organisations that will provide dementia-specific training to 17,000 aged care workers across Australia - 8,000 more than was originally expected.

Originally this funding was only expected to result in training for around 9,000 workers. However the efficiency of the training delivery means that an extra 8,000 aged care workers will be able to access this training at no extra cost to the taxpayer.

The training will cover vital aspects of good dementia care, including care planning, communication, and managing challenging behaviour.

This new training underscores the Australian Government's commitment to dementia as a national health priority. It is part of the \$320.6 million announced in the 2005 Budget and is in addition to the \$2.8 billion in annual funding for programs that support people dementia and their carers.

### **Investing in aged care services in our communities**

I am committed to choice in aged care - as is the Government - and we've backed that commitment with a range of initiatives that support the provision of care to elderly Australians living independently in their communities.

While we traditionally thought of aged care as being provided in aged care homes, this Government has focussed its attention on the need to support older people who wish to continue living in their own homes, close to their communities, family, friends and amenities.

The Government has provided \$24.2 million over five years to improve the Aged Care Assessment program which will ensure more timely, consistent and accountable assessments for frail older people requiring care services. Access to the Home and Community Care (HACC) program will also be improved through joint work with the states and territories to simplify entry and improve eligibility and assessment processes.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to these changes and to the Australian Government providing the funding (including \$0.1 million in 2005-06) for improved performance management of Aged Care Assessment teams.

COAG also endorsed the joint work by the Commonwealth and the states and territories to improve access to HACC services. This work is a part of the reforms set out in *A New Strategy for Community Care — The Way Forward*.

Funding has also been allocated to keep pace with the increased demand for aged care assessments, to support community care providers in rural areas and continue the Government's commitment to improving access to community care for people living in retirement villages.

### **Meeting the special needs of older Australians**

Older Australians have special and particular needs and this Budget contains a series of initiatives to meet those needs.

Different people require different kinds of support from the Government as they grow older, and when the time comes for them to access aged care.

I'm pleased to announce that Budget measures which acknowledge the ageing-related needs of a range of people, including older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people who have particular needs in

relation to certain conditions.

A further 150 aged care places for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people will be provided over the next four years under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands Aged Care Strategy.

These flexible care places will help ensure that more older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands people can access culturally appropriate and more viable care services, as close to their communities as possible.

The additional places will increase funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander places by \$15.1 million over four years.

Funding has also been provided for a new National Eye Health Initiative, with the Government committing \$13.8 million over four years to this initiative.

Much vision loss and blindness in Australia is potentially avoidable through prevention activities, early detection and intervention. However, many Australians with treatable eye diseases do not seek help until it's too late for sight to be preserved.

This initiative will be targeted at people who are at particular risk of eye disease and injury, including older people, people with a family history of eye diseases, people with diabetes and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

### **Continuing commitment**

Overall, I think that the above measures and others contained in the 2006 Federal Budget are evidence of the Government's continued commitment to choice, quality and financial sustainability for aged care. They will ensure these three elements continue to remain features of the aged care landscape in this country.

The Budget invests heavily in the safety of residents, the quality of care and the skills of the dedicated and tireless people who dedicate their careers to looking after the frail aged.

I commend it to you.

I wish you all the best and again say thank you to all who are involved in caring for our ageing and frail fellow Australians.

## Reunited at last



*Former resident Dimi has been reunited with his family in Bulgaria*

Fred Combridge House, a Churches of Christ Community Care home in Victoria, has won a

Better Practice Award for an innovative program that works towards reuniting residents with their loved ones.

*The Standard* reported on Dimi's story in September 2005 and told how Dimi thought all his family in Bulgaria were dead.

With a lot of research and persistent correspondence, staff at the home found Dimi's family and arranged for him to be reunited. Dimi had said he wanted to die in Bulgaria. Today, a year later, Dimi is still living happily in Bulgaria with his three long lost brothers and

many nieces and nephews.

The home has also reunited a resident with her family in Greece, another resident was transferred to a nursing home in South Africa to be closer to her family. She died six weeks later surrounded by her family and in her home country.

In 1998, 2004, 2005 and 2006 residents were discharged home in Melbourne to live with their families.

Every resident living at the home is encouraged to be reunited with their loved ones.

## Quality indicators in public sector homes in Victoria

In 2004, the Victorian Department of Human Services contracted LaTrobe University to develop quality of care performance indicators for Victorian public sector residential aged care homes. A set of six indicators were trialled in 20 sites across 10 services. Indicators were trialed in the areas of pressure ulcers, new fractures from falls, use of daily physical restraints, 9 plus medications, significant weight change and depression.

Education and training began last month and the tested quality performance indicators (with the exception of the depression indicator, which requires more work) will then be rolled out across all Victorian public sector residential aged care services. A communication strategy targeting the broader service sector and the community will also be implemented.

2006/07 will be a transition year

while services become familiar with performance management, integrate it into their continuous improvement strategy and take the first steps in benchmarking. Full implementation and reporting is proposed from the beginning of 2007/08.

*For more information on the project, contact Elaine Pulleine, on (03) 9096 8327 or email [Elaine.Pulleine@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:Elaine.Pulleine@dhs.vic.gov.au).*

## UK Malnutrition guidelines

There has been some discussion in the media recently about the prevalence of malnutrition among the elderly, whether living at home, staying in hospital or living in an aged care facility.

The UK's National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has released guidelines for 'Nutrition support in adults: oral nutrition support, enteral tube feeding and parenteral nutrition.'

The guidelines aim to help healthcare professionals correctly

identify those who need nutrition support, and enable them to choose and deliver the most appropriate nutrition support at the most appropriate time.

The report covers issues including screening for malnutrition and monitoring of nutrition support, as well as enteral tube feeding and parenteral nutrition.

To view the report, go to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence website: [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

Expected outcome 2.10 of the Accreditation Standards 'Nutrition and hydration' states that residents should receive adequate nourishment and hydration. Results assessed by Agency quality assessors include:

- Management demonstrates its residents receive adequate nutrition and hydration
- Residents/representatives confirm they are satisfied with the home's approach to meeting residents' nutrition and hydration needs and associated support needs.

## SS Goinowhere

Residents from Tannoch Brae Hostel in St Albans Park Victoria, recently embarked on a five-day 'cruise' on the ship SS Goinowhere. Passengers (residents) were issued with itineraries, passports and a ticket to the Captain's Dinner. The "ship" was decorated with life rings, flags, lifejackets, buoys, a lifeboat and portholes. All crew were highly trained and carried out duties to an excellent standard.

Each morning began with a safety display, going over the finer points of safety at sea. Passengers could book into the Rainbow Café where the friendly waitresses served a delicious morning tea, they could attend to some duty free shopping, visit the Sunshine Beauty Parlour or partake in any one of the many shipboard or onshore activities.

Activities included maindeck aerobics, a treasure chest relay, a cruisy quiz, tropical bingo, shuffleboard, quoits, darts, the making of seashell potpourri in shell decorated boxes, a



*Enjoying the 'Captain's Dinner'*

shipboard sing-a-long, a visiting entertainer, happy hour, onshore visits to local shops and the Geelong Maritime Museum.

The highlight was the Captain's Dinner. Captain Bray (the home's chaplain) ran a tight ship. Passengers were a little worried about walking the plank, but the code of conduct was exemplary. Crew participated in a limbo competition at the captain's dinner – great entertainment.

Passengers even visited Hawaii to coincide with Pancake Day, dressing in hula skirts, Hawaiian shirts and leis, raising money for Uniting Care.

On the last day of the cruise, Queen Neptune visited during happy hour and presented passengers with 'Crossing the Line' certificate in recognition of them crossing the international date line.

Now, where to next?

## Top drop

Cardinal Stepinac Village in St John's Park Sydney, recently toasted their home with a glass of their own homemade wine 'Didovino', (roughly translated as 'Grandpop's drop') at their annual vocation day.

Directors, residents, community volunteers and the local community came together in a religious service to celebrate and acknowledge the good work of those that make the residents happy in their home. Four special candles were lit during the service, and certificates were presented to staff and volunteers.



# Wanderers and sundowners join the club

Pittwater Nursing Home, a Thomson Healthcare home in Sydney, has introduced a morning and supper club for residents with dementia, resulting in less aimless wandering and confusion, and a more secure and settling environment for all.

The group has had a flow-on effect, with other frail aged residents feeling more comfortable now that residents are not wandering around the facility, and nursing staff are able to focus on their allocated work, as the residents with dementia are involved with their 'club'.

The group is run by recreational activities officers who play soft music in a separate quiet area. Dementia specific activities such as reminiscence, tactile games, simple puzzles, aromatherapy and hand massages are used. The recreational activities officer also



Staff member and resident enjoying the morning club activities

assists the group with their morning tea and supper, which has resulted in an improvement in the residents' nutrition and hydration as they receive more assistance and closer monitoring.

Both the recreational activities officers and nursing staff have noticed an improvement in

agitation levels of confused residents. When the Director of Nursing asked evening staff for their responses to the introduction of the clubs, one staff member said: "The whole atmosphere has taken on a different feel in the evening making it calmer and less stressful for all in the evening."

## Better 2006 Practice



**Adelaide**  
25-26 May 2006

**Hobart**  
29-30 June 2006

**Brisbane**  
13-14 July 2006

**Sydney**  
24-25 August 2006

**Perth**  
19-20 October 2006

**Melbourne**  
23-24 November 2006

The Better Practice events are just around the corner with the first one being held at the Stamford Grand Adelaide in Glenelg, 25-26 May 2006.

To register for the Adelaide or any of the other events go to [www.accreditation.org.au](http://www.accreditation.org.au) or phone the events team on 02 8831 1028.

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